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STATE FOR AF/E/WALSH AND ACTING A/S CARTER

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TAGS: [EAID](#) [EWWT](#) [KE](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [SO](#)  
SUBJECT: SOMALIA - ENCOURAGING KENYAN ENGAGEMENT

REF: A. 08 NAIROBI 2793

[B](#). NAIROBI 209

[C](#). NAIROBI 267

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Summary  
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[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Kenya is increasingly concerned about Somali instability spilling over its border and affecting its share of Indian Ocean trade. The Government of Kenya is seeking ways to help stabilize Somalia, cooperate on counter-piracy, and improve the plight of Somali refugees in Kenya. We should encourage their regional diplomatic and security interventions by increasing our Somali-related assistance and training to Kenya, pushing Kenya to actively engage with the Somali transitional government on training and other exchanges, and by helping them take a regional leadership role on maritime security. We should continue pressure on the GOK to cooperate on assistance the Dadaab refugee camp. End Summary.

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Kenya's Heightened  
Attention to Somalia  
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[1](#)2. (U) Somalia has resurfaced as a key discussion topic in recent meetings with senior Kenyan leaders. The renewed attention is likely largely due to fresh Kenyan concerns Somali instability will spill into Kenya's Somali border region, or possibly even into Somali immigrant neighborhoods in Nairobi. President Kibaki and Foreign Minister Wetangula have raised Somali insecurity directly with the Ambassador, and Prime Minister Odinga and Chief of General Staff Kianga discussed it with AFRICOM commander General Ward (ref A). Kenya has also reengaged diplomatically on Somalia. In October 2008 Kenya hosted an extraordinary Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) meeting to pressure then-Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf and his prime minister to work more cooperatively. In December 2008 they were the first IGAD country to threaten sanctions on Yusuf, s short-lived rump government.

[1](#)3. (U) Kenya's concerns about spillover of Somali insecurity are well-justified. Cross-border raids from Somalia into Kenya are becoming more frequent and have included carjackings, kidnapping of westerners, and attacks against security personnel. A recent small arms attack against a German aid vehicle near Dadaab refugee camp while it was under police escort highlights the challenge to Kenya, s

security forces.

¶4. (U) Kenya is also concerned about the huge increase in piracy in 2008, the economic costs of which Kenya finally began to count in terms of diversion of shipping and increased transportation costs. The United States has asked Kenya to honor a recently-signed Memorandum of Understanding by receiving and prosecuting suspected pirates captured by the U.S. Navy.

¶5. (U) The dramatic increase in Somali refugees, and pressure from the diplomatic and international communities on Kenyan authorities to address the problem, also appears to be bearing fruit (Septel). Perhaps most importantly, the GOK recognizes the new Somali government and renewed hopes for a lasting peace present an opportunity for Kenya to exert its influence regionally, while associating itself with U.S. efforts on Somalia.

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Kenya as a Regional  
Security Training Partner  
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¶6. (U) Foreign Minister Wetangula has told the Ambassador his government wanted to help train Somalia's security services. (Note: In 2007 Kenya trained about 200 members of then-Somali President Yusuf's presidential guard. End Note.) In late 2008, the foreign ministry provided post with a plan to train 10,000 Somali police, but the proposal's cost was excessive. The program was later deemed cost prohibitive.

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While Kenya remains eager to access U.S. financial support for its proposal, there is a recognition that much remains to be determined before any training could commence. We will continue our discussions on Somali security training with the Kenyans, and recommend Washington identify funds be set aside for Kenya to have a role in Somalia's security sector reform. Their participation in training would help maintain Kenya's political engagement (e.g., through IGAD) in Somalia.

¶7. (SBU) For example, the United States could fund the Kenyan's training of Somali officers and non-commissioned officers, either in Mogadishu (preferred) or in Kenya. AMISOM and Uganda have provided only basic enlisted training to Somalia. Some of Kenya's active and retired general officers have conflict resolution and peacekeeping experience, and are respected throughout Africa. This cadre of military officers could be called on to mentor senior Somali officers or Defense and Interior officials. In addition, the Nairobi-based United Nations Political Office for Somalia has asked for an African general officer to manage its Security Sector Office. The United States could lobby for a Kenyan to fill the position. Kenyan journalists could help train their Somali counterparts. Kenyan ministries could host Somali civil servants for training. Finally, the Kenyan government itself could do with more exposure and training on Somalia.

¶8. (U) Kenya is also convinced it can better serve the needs of the international community for information sharing and coordination of land-based support for maritime operations. U.S.-Kenyan cooperation on the Center for Maritime Excellence in Mombasa offers the possibility for Kenya to be a hub for maritime security training. We recommend Kenya be encouraged to host Somaliland and Puntland trainees who would benefit from exposure to their regional colleagues during maritime security training.

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Kenya Engaged on  
Somali Piracy  
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¶9. (U) Kenya has emerged as a willing regional leader in the

fight against piracy. Kenya has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States to accept our captured suspected pirates, and has a proven capacity to prosecute and convict pirates. A first transfer under the MOU may take place shortly. As Kenya receives more pirates, they will need legal capacity building, training, and possibly funds to handle suspected pirates, detention. U.S. support to Kenya's criminal justice system will help assure the Kenyans remain reliably cooperative on maritime security and piracy.

¶10. (U) Additionally, Kenya is a charter member of the Contact Group on Somali Piracy (CGSP). We should encourage Kenya's cooperation against piracy and as a regional locus for maritime security. As reported in ref B, President Kibaki has expressed strong interest in having an anti-piracy coordination center established in Kenya as envisioned by the CGSP. MFA contacts have further elaborated: Kenya envisions serving as a "Navigational Coordination Center" for maritime operations undertaken by CGSP members against Somali pirates.

The Kenyan Maritime Authority would play a key role. The GOK is concerned that France is supporting Djibouti's bid to host the same and is seeking U.S. support. We recommend the U.S. encourage and support Kenya as the Center's site.

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Making Kenya a Better  
Partner on Somali Refugees  
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¶11. (U) More than 70,000 Somali refugees have sought shelter in the three Dadaab refugee camps since January 2008, swelling the total camp population to more than 250,000, and straining the international community's ability to provide minimally acceptable levels of water and other essential humanitarian services. The severe overcrowding has contributed to a rash of security incidents, the outbreak of contagious diseases, and the potential for a fire catastrophe. The local Kenyan community blames the refugees for degrading the environment and has blocked UNHCR's

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attempts to establish a fourth camp. The GoK has legitimate security concerns about encouraging an increased number of Somali refugees, seemingly ignoring the fact that they are coming anyway. The Kenyans may see a proposed fourth camp as undermining their efforts to secure the area's porous border.

¶12. (U) During the visit of UNHCR Deputy High Commissioner Craig Johnstone to Kenya in early February, the Kenyan PM and other key GOK officials verbally committed the GOK to implementing a package of activities to relieve the overcrowding in the camps (ref C). It has agreed to allocate land for a fourth camp, to transfer some refugees from Dadaab to the Kakuma refugee camp in Northwest Kenya, and to address more effectively the needs of the host community around Dadaab. We recommend holding the GOK to its pledges, while simultaneously providing financial incentives to Kenya, for example to help the government overcome host community opposition to the fourth camp.

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Comment  
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¶13. (U) Comment: Increased instability on its border with Somalia, piracy, and the ballooning number of Somalia refugees in its Dadaab refugee camp are making Kenya an increasingly willing partner with us on regional security, especially as it pertains to Somalia. We should nurture that growing interest by considering them for assistance, capacity building and cooperation on maritime security and piracy, and as a possible source for training for Somalia's security forces. With the commitment from the GOK, we are beginning to see progress on resolving the humanitarian emergency in Dadaab; however, we and the international community must maintain pressure on the GOK to work with the local

government officials to quickly allocate additional land. To this end, the USG and other donor countries have demarched the PM and key GOK officials. End Comment.

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RANNEBERGER